

PRESS RELEASE

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FEDERAL GRANTS AWARDED TO COMBAT GUN AND GANG CRIME

\$247,726 TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO FIVE AGENCIES

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced today that the U.S. Department of Justice, as a part of the national Project Safe Neighborhoods program, has awarded five grants to combat gun and gang crime to law enforcement agencies within the Western District. Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) is a nationwide program to reduce gun crime in America by networking existing local programs that target gun crime and providing those programs with additional tools necessary to be successful. Through partnership with federal, state, and local law enforcement, each United States Attorney is implementing Project Safe Neighborhoods in a manner that is designed to target the most significant gun crime problems within his or her district.

The Madison Police Department and the Rock County Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with the Beloit and Janesville Police Departments, have received anti-gang grants. These grants support new and expanded anti-gang prevention and enforcement efforts under the PSN initiative. These new funds will allow existing PSN task forces in

Madison and Rock County to combat gangs by building on the effective strategies and partnerships developed under PSN. The Madison Police Department will receive \$121,771 and Rock County will receive \$58,000.

In addition, there were three PSN gun violence reduction grants awarded. The agencies receiving grant awards include the La Crosse Police Department, which will receive \$30,708; the West Central Drug Enforcement Task Force, which will receive \$23,247 to be used in Eau Claire, Dunn and Chippewa Counties; and the Fitchburg Police Department, which will receive \$14,000.

United States Attorney Peterson said, "These federal resources will help law enforcement agencies investigate and prosecute violent offenders and gang members who terrorize our communities. This office is proud to be a part of these collaborative teams of local and federal officials working together to address gun and gang violence. The PSN program sends a clear message to criminals - you will do hard time for gun crimes."

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